

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



MEDIA ADVISORY

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Government Reform to Consider **Metro Authorization, Federal Real Property Bills**

What: GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING

When: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2005, 1:30 P.M.

Where: ROOM 2154, RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Background:

The Government Reform Committee will hold a business meeting to mark up the following:

H.R. 3496, the National Capital Transportation Amendments Act of 2005

H.R. 3496, introduced in July by Chairman Davis and the Members of the national capital region delegation, would authorize federal funding for capital improvements and critical preventive maintenance needs of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The precedent for federal investment in WMATA dates back to 1960, when President Eisenhower signed the "National Capital Transportation Act," creating a National Capital Transportation Agency to develop a regional rail system for the Nation's Capital.

Since that time, Congress has periodically infused the system with funding for maintenance and expansion. Today, almost half of the system's ridership is composed of federal employees and contractors, with half of the stations directly serving federal office buildings. In exchange for \$1.5 billion over ten years in federal funding, the legislation would: (1) require Maryland, D.C. and Virginia to fund 50% of the net cost of any capital and preventive maintenance project; (2) establish an IG for WMATA to oversee its spending and finances; (3) require Maryland, D.C. and Virginia to establish dedicated

funding streams to pay for their share of Metro's costs; and (4) add to WMATA's Board of Directors two members representing federal interests.

H.R. 3134, Federal Real Property Disposal Pilot Program and Management Improvement Act of 2005

H.R. 3134, introduced in June by Government Reform Committee Chairman Davis and Budget Committee Chairman Jim Nussle, would authorize the creation of a Federal Real Property Disposal Pilot Program to permit the expedited disposal of excess property, surplus property, or under-performing real property in accordance with the provisions in the legislation. This legislation is intended to improve the management of federal real property, a key component of the President's management agenda.

The Federal government's real estate portfolio has over 3.2 billion square feet in nearly 525,000 buildings valued at over \$328 billion. Despite the hundreds of millions of dollars spent each year to maintain these properties, many are in disrepair, lack updated technological infrastructure, pose health and safety threats, and no longer meet the Federal government's mission needs, earning federal property management a place on GAO's High Risk Series. For example, of the 8,000 buildings managed by the General Services Administration (GSA), more than half are over 50 years old and are in deteriorating condition requiring an estimated \$5.7 billion in repairs. As a result, agencies are often forced to vacate properties and lease costly space from the private sector.

H.R. 3134 would begin to address these challenges by authorizing the government to dispose of costly real properties it no longer needs, and codifying provisions from President Bush's E.O. 13327, such as the inventory database, the Federal Real Property Council, and the Senior Real Property Officers. The legislation would create a 5-year pilot program to allow for the expedited disposal of federal excess, surplus, or under-performing real properties outside of the bureaucratic conveyance process. Under the pilot, the Director of OMB would select properties to participate in the program, provided the government sold the property at or above fair market value, and provided that the sale would generate proceeds for the government. As an incentive to participate, the affected agency is permitted to retain a portion of those proceeds.

H.R. 1455, to include the Secretary and Department of Homeland Security in lists of executive departments and officers

H.R. 1455, introduced in April by Chairman Davis and Subcommittee Chairman Todd Platts, would amend the U.S. Code in two places. First, it would amend section 101 of title 5 to add the Department of Homeland Security to the list of executive departments of the Federal government, which would apply to the Department the various government-wide statutes governing contracting and training. Second, H.R. 1455 would amend section 19 of title 3, U.S. Code, to add the Secretary of Homeland Security to the list of presidential successors. The legislation would place the Secretary eighth in line to succeed the President in the event of a crisis, behind the Vice President, Speaker, Senate

President Pro Tempore, Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasury, Secretary of Defense, and Attorney General.

H.R. 4057, to amend title 5, United States Code, to extend compensatory time off for travel to attorneys in the Department of Justice

H.R. 4057, introduced by Reps. Jon Porter, Tom Davis, Henry Waxman, Danny Davis and Chris Van Hollen, would clarify that Department of Justice attorneys are eligible to receive compensatory time off for time spent in travel status. Congress initially provided this “comp-time for travel” authority in the Federal Workforce Flexibility Act of 2004 (Pub. L. 108-411). However, due to limitations on premium pay for DOJ attorneys included in the FY2000 omnibus appropriations measure, the Justice Department determined that it did not have the legal authority to apply the comp-time provision to their attorneys. The purpose of H.R. 4057 is to clarify that it was in fact the intent of Congress, in passing the Federal Workforce Flexibility Act of 2004, to provide the authority to all federal employees, including DOJ attorneys.

H.R. 3256, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3038 West Liberty Avenue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as the “Congressman James Grove Fulton Memorial Post Office Building.”

H.R. 3368, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6483 Lincoln Street in Gagetown, Michigan, as the “Gagetown Veterans Memorial Post Office.”

H.R. 3548, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located on Franklin Avenue in Pearl River, New York, as the “Heinz Ahlmeyer, Jr. Post Office Building.”

H.R. 3770, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 205 West Washington Street in Knox, Indiana, as the “Grant W. Green Post Office Building.”

H.R. 3825, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 770 Trumbull Drive in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as the “Clayton J. Smith Memorial Post Office Building.”

H.R. 3989, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 37598 Goodhue Avenue in Dennison, Minnesota, as the “Albert Harold Quie Post Office.”

H.R. 4053, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 545 North Rimsdale Avenue in Covina, California, as the “Lillian Kinkella Keil Post Office.”

S. 37, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 2 years.

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